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AUTHOR Fraser, Bryna Shore; Charner, Ivan
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ABSTRACT

Factors such as the widespread corporate restructuring of the 1980s, international pressures, and technological advancement have created a youth employment crisis. Schools cannot singlehandedly educate students for the new jobs of the 1990s because they lack the understanding of today's workplace needs, technology, and funding. Employers, community agencies, and schools must pool their resources and work together to develop effective youth transition programs. The experiences of four cities with demonstrated commitments to education reform (Boston, Massachusetts; Miami, Florida; Louisville, Kentucky; and Portland, Oregon) were studied to identify strategies that could be replicated by other communities interested in addressing their youth employment problems by developing community youth transition programs. Hearings in the four cities established the following elements as crucial to successful community-based school-to-work transition programs: community collaboration, school effectiveness, school-to-work transition services, and measurements and credentials. A blueprint for action was proposed that calls collaboration at the community level and the formation of two bodies: coalitions of concerned citizens to shape the vision of and monitor the effectiveness of their community's youth transition program and an office of youth transition services to facilitate long-term implementation of the youth transition program. (Contains 52 references.) (MN)

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Challenging Our Communities

Purposeful Action for Youth Transition from School to Work

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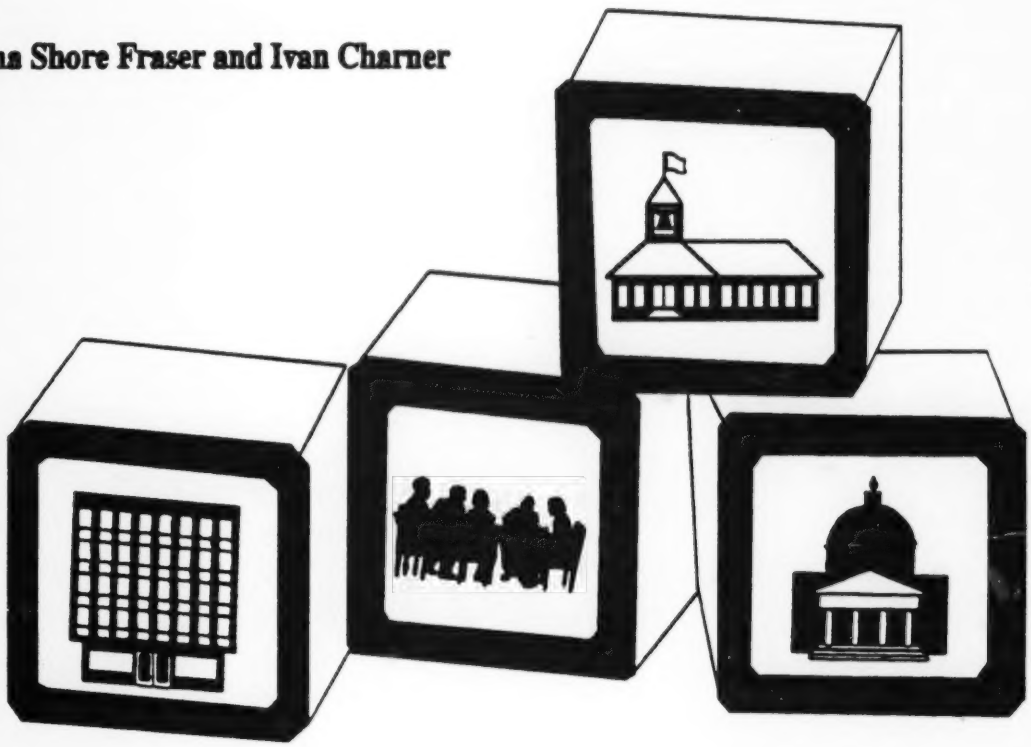

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Challenging Our Communities

Purposeful Action for Youth Transition from School to Work

Bryna Shore Fraser and Ivan Charner

ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
National Institute for Work and Learning

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THE ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT is an independent, tax-exempt, nonprofit organization committed to addressing human development needs through education, communication and information. Under contracts and grants, the Academy operates programs for government and international agencies, educational institutions, foundations and corporations. Since its founding in 1961, the Academy has conducted projects throughout the United States and in more than 100 countries in the developing world.

In partnership with its clients, the Academy focuses on increasing access to learning, improving the functioning of educational institutions and expanding the sphere of education to social and economic development.

The Academy promotes collaboration among employers, unions, educators, service organizations and government through the National Institute for Work and Learning. Funded by public and private donors, NIWL targets the millions of Americans who can profit from a better integration of the traditionally separate worlds of work and education. NIWL accomplishes its goals through research, program evaluations, technical assistance and information networking.

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October 1992

FOREWORD

AS WE APPROACH THE 21ST CENTURY, a large segment of our young people are having great difficulty entering the labor force. The problem is complicated and has received attention from educators, researchers, policymakers, corporations and the media—with diverse analyses and remedies but no easy answers. Our nation's promise of universal opportunity still holds for some young people but not for others.

High school students planning to go on to college have a variety of resources to support them, including SAT preparation courses, college catalogs, books on colleges, college counselors and college placement specialists. The system for college-bound students is highly developed and works well.

Unfortunately, there is no parallel system for high school students who want to or must enter directly into the labor force.

In earlier times, when jobs were plentiful and the labor sector less sophisticated, there was not an urgent requirement for a formal

system to assist students who would not enter college immediately after high school.

Today, new modes of information and technology have forced a restructuring of the home, the school and the workplace. As a result, there is a critical need to create systems, based primarily in schools, that effectively serve the interests and potential of young people who do not enter college directly after high school—just as current systems accommodate the purpose and promise of college-bound students.

IN THE LATE 1980's, the Academy for Educational Development, through its National Institute for Work and Learning, held public hearings and heard testimony in four U.S. cities to learn about youth transition problems, policies, practices and programs. Since that time, we have used the information and lessons learned in presentations, research reports and discussions with program operators and policymakers.

The ongoing national debate on youth unemployment, and its complex relationship with the economy, global competition and technology, also speaks clearly about the **inadequate preparation of today's youth for the highly-skilled jobs that increasingly dominate entry-level employment.**

This national youth employment crisis has caused us to return to our experiences in Boston, Louisville, Miami and Portland. What we heard four years ago from teachers, school administrators, youth workers, parents, students, employers and local government representatives continues to have relevance and implications for other communities across the country.

The four communities were in the forefront of developing systemic approaches to the education and work needs of young people. In the first two parts of this report, we analyze the problems and various approaches to the transition from school to work. There follows what we consider the heart of the report—the **experiences in the four communities** and a series of **lessons learned** from those experiences. The final part provides a practical agenda, a "Blueprint for Action," for a community youth transition program.

THE EXPERIENCES IN THE FOUR COMMUNITIES clearly show the critical issues and problems related to the **connection** between school and work for youth. It is also evident that no one solution will work for all young people. Problems must be examined community by community. And solutions must be developed at the community level because each community is unique.

While there may be a place for new programs within established institutions, it is increasingly apparent that we need to take a systemic approach to the youth transition problem. ***Challenging Our Communities: Purposeful Action for Youth Transition from School to Work*** describes the efforts in four cities to build effective coalitions of business, education, labor, government and community-based organizations that can assess community needs and resources and then plan, implement and evaluate programs for youth that connect education and work.

MANY PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS generously provided their time and support to this undertaking. Without their assistance, this project would not have been possible.

A grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation funded the public hearings in Boston, Louisville, Miami and Portland. Additional support was received from Imasco U.S.A.; the Ingram-White Castle Foundation; McDonald's Corporation; the National Restaurant Association; Pillsbury Company; Pizza Hut, Inc.; Sears, Roebuck and Company; and the Xerox Foundation.

We are deeply indebted to former Secretaries of Labor John T. Dunlop and Willard Wirtz, co-chairs of a group of distinguished national leaders who helped us define and examine the major issues related to youth and work. The leadership group's participation in hearings in the four cities and their thoughtful comments and concerns helped stimulate discussion of youth transition at the local level and enhance the possibilities for community action.

Other members included Peter M. Arum, National Education Association; Robert Beavers, McDonald's Corporation; Sue E. Berryman, Institute on Education and the Economy; Roger C. Cuevas, Dade County Public Schools; Joseph A. Fernandez, New York City Public Schools; Mary Hatwood Futrell, George Washington University; Keith Geiger, National Education Association; John Goodlad, Center for Educational Renewal; Frederick Ley, formerly of Chief Auto Parts; M. Hayes Mizell, The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation; Albert Shanker, American Federation of Teachers; William J. Spring, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston; Scott D. Thomson, former Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals; Stephen J. Thorpe, Sears, Roebuck and Company; Manya S. Ungar, National Parent Teachers Association; and David Zemelman, Pizza Hut, Inc.

A number of people were instrumental in arranging the forums and deserve special mention and gratitude: in Louisville, Regina M. J. Kyle, The Kyle Group; in Miami, Annette Katz, United Teachers of

Dade, and Lynn Shenkman, Dade County Public Schools; and in Portland, Andrea Baker, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

And, finally, we wish to thank the many teachers, administrators, agency representatives, employers, students and parents who shared their experiences and insights with us as we traveled across the country. Their words and deeds gave us reason to believe that, through purposeful community action, we can indeed meet the challenge of providing all our youth with the education, skills and support they need to become creative and productive citizens.

Sharon L. Franz
Senior Vice President,
Education and Exchange Services
ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

October 1992

CONTENTS

A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CRISIS 1

WHAT CAN COMMUNITIES DO? 5

THE EXPERIENCE IN FOUR CITIES 9
- Boston: A Compact of Schools and Business 9
- Louisville: Business, Government, School as Partners 13
- Portland: A Master Plan to Meet Student Needs 16
- Miami: An Array of Collaborative Projects 18

LESSONS LEARNED: A VIEW ACROSS THE COMMUNITIES 21
- Community Collaboration 22
- School Effectiveness 24
- School-to-Work Transition 27
- Summary 31

BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION:
COMMUNITY YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM 32

SOURCES 39

A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CRISIS

THE ALARM ABOUT AMERICAN YOUTH'S most virulent difficulties—substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, criminal delinquency—has been sounded so stridently that little attention is being paid to a less graphic, but no less threatening, problem. More and more young people are having a harder and harder time moving from school to work with any reasonable prospect of long-term productive employment.

The youth employment situation must be viewed as part of the larger human capital problem facing the United States. Almost 23 million adults are illiterate. Fundamental problems of homelessness, drug abuse and inadequate health care have weakened worker productivity. Americans are experiencing job loss, declining real income and buying power, an increasing proportion of jobs that do not pay a living wage and a growing overall anxiety about their economic future.

America's youth have been hit particularly hard by these results of the restructuring of the labor market, the workplace, the community

and the family. In fact, among young people, the employment problem has reached crisis proportions:

Of the nearly three million young people who enter the job market each year, one out of 10 nationwide is not finding long-term, productive employment.

- More than four in 10 young people—high school graduates and dropouts alike—hold low-skill service jobs paying less than a living wage with little chance for advancement.
- The unemployment rate among young people who seek work as soon as they graduate from high school is about 25 percent. The rate remains about the same up to five years after graduation, declining slightly with more years in the labor force.
- One-fifth of high school graduates fail to find long-term employment, and currently one in five families headed by a high school graduate lives in poverty.
- Of the nearly three million young people who enter the job market each year, an estimated 300,000 (one out of 10 nationwide) are not finding long-term, productive employment and probably will not for the rest of their lives.

Employment success is closely correlated with schooling: the more years of formal education, the greater a young person's annual earnings are likely to be—regardless of race or ethnic origin. About 25 percent or 750,000 of the three million children born in the U.S. each year will complete college and make satisfactory employment connections. Another 25 percent, who combine high school with one or two years of postsecondary education, also will prove reasonably self-sufficient.

The other half of each age group, those who don't go beyond high school and particularly those who drop out before earning diplomas, are experiencing increasing difficulties. Their unemployment rates are discouragingly high. About one-fifth of these youth—10 percent of all young people—are considered at "very high risk" of never achieving economic self-sufficiency.

IT IS TOO EASY TO BLAME SCHOOLS for the dropout problem and for not turning out employable graduates. But there are many causes for youth employment and transition problems, including:

- adults' negative attitudes and expectations;
- employer reluctance to hire youth for career-ladder jobs;
- hiring practices that do not reward school achievements; and
- local labor-market conditions.

In fact, the youth employment crisis is deeply rooted in converging social and economic trends, including reduced family support, slower economic growth, changes in the composition and organization of work and a marketplace where global forces dictate direction.

As recently as 40 years ago, the majority of young men followed their fathers' footsteps into farms, factories and trades. Most young women became housewives like their mothers. For those willing to work hard in spite of little education, jobs with wages sufficient to support a family were plentiful. Manufacturing jobs dominated the workforce, providing a buffer to absorb laborers who could be trained on the job.

Today, the high-paying factory positions that employed our grandparents' generation of laborers—many of them school dropouts and immigrants lacking formal education—are disappearing. Companies have replaced workers with machines or shifted manufacturing to countries where costs are lower. Most of today's factory jobs require at least a high school education to operate computerized equipment.

The trend away from manufacturing and toward skilled service and technology has had a devastating effect on employment, especially for young people attempting to enter the labor force. During the next 10 years, more than one million low-skill jobs will disappear. **Over half the new jobs will require post-high school training.** The median education required for entry-level positions will climb from 12.8 years to 13.5 years.

And yet, while the demand for a skilled workforce has never been greater, 800,000 high school students are dropping out each year, and one million high school graduates do not go on to postsecondary education.

The trend away from manufacturing and toward skilled service and technology has had a devastating effect on employment, especially for young people attempting to enter the labor force.

HOW WILL CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES affect these young people, their families and the rest of us? Consider the following statistics:

- More than half the young families headed by a school dropout live in poverty, and the percentage has increased in recent years.
- As a group, high school dropouts work less, earn less, commit more crimes, have more unplanned children, and show up on welfare rolls more often than young people who make it through high school.
- Once in the ranks of the "hard-core" unemployed, each of these young people will cost the community an estimated $50,000 each year of his or her life for food, housing, health, welfare, prison or other institutional care. This amounts to more than $15 billion every year in direct costs for each age group, with a new group entering the job market each year.

The above figures do not address the impact of lost revenues and declining productivity on the U.S. economy. Between 1979 and 1988,

the gross domestic product per employed person grew by only one percent a year in the U.S., compared to 1.5 to 2.5 percent in major European countries. Manufacturing output per hour increased annually by 2.8 percent in the U.S., contrasted with 7.8 percent in Japan between 1960 and 1988.

WE ARE LOSING OUR COMPETITIVE EDGE. One reason is that a large percentage of workforce entrants are not prepared for available jobs.

As corporations in the 1980's reconfigured the nature of employment in response to international economic pressures and new technology, more sophisticated entry-level positions emerged.

Our schools—already struggling to overcome student learning dysfunctions, resulting from poverty in many instances—have proven ill-equipped to educate students for these new jobs. The deficiency is twofold: on the whole, schools do not understand today's workplace needs and they also lack the tools, primarily technology and funding, to prepare students to leave the classroom and enter the workplace.

Evidence clearly supports the emerging consensus that the U.S. has not kept pace with overseas competition at least in part because of failure to develop young people's capacities and help them make that all-important transition from education to employment.

We can no longer afford the consequences of ignoring the growing number of young people who cannot find work because of changes in the job market or because they are undereducated, underskilled or simply lack direction. If we do not take purposeful action now, our youth, our communities and our country are all at risk.

SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS, together with other community agencies, must come together to develop effective strategies for addressing the youth employment crisis that affects us all. This report is intended to provide guidance for everyone in the community who is concerned with education-work initiatives by addressing key questions: What is the nature and scope of the youth employment crisis? What are specific priority areas? What are other communities doing to create youth education-work solutions? What works and what doesn't? And where does a community begin once it decides to take action to assist youth to successfully make the transition from school to work?

If we do not take purposeful action now, our youth, our communities and our country are all at risk.

Using lessons learned in communities that are confronting this challenge, we can and must act now to provide all youth with the education, skills and support to become creative and productive members of society.

WHAT CAN COMMUNITIES DO?

THE BUSINESS WORLD'S INTEREST in education has increased directly in proportion to the decline in the number of employable young people. Many influential members of the business community realize that the survival of the nation's economy is at stake and that education is in everyone's best interest.

Educators have acknowledged they need the community's help and have reached out for advice and support. Among community leaders, there is a growing realization that a solution must be "home grown," that no knight-in-shining-armor will arrive from Washington. The federal government has adopted a policy that it can stimulate but not mandate change at the local level.

Community-based programs are attempting to build on past efforts in order to provide new educational and employment opportunities for young people. The ground is fertile for new ideas, new energy and a new initiative. Which way should the communities move?

What issues are most critical? How can the problem be attacked in a systemic way?

If the youth employment crisis is to be solved, the community must pull together, pool resources and work collaboratively.

The Academy for Educational Development through its National Institute for Work and Learning convened a group of national leaders to examine the major issues related to youth and work and to offer guidance for future education-work initiatives in the public and private sectors. The goal of this effort was to identify existing policies, programs and directions that appear to address the needs of young people, educators and employers, based on a working hypothesis that the massive change in the nature and circumstances of youth work requires new forms of cooperation and collaboration among schools, employers, community organizations and local government.

To guide our research, we focused on several promising approaches to addressing education-work needs for young people and employers: **community collaboration, school effectiveness, school-to-work transition** and **measurements and credentials**. These elements are not discrete but are interactive; success in one area will be reflected in other areas, just as failure in one part ripples through the whole.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

If the youth employment crisis is to be solved, there is general agreement that the community must pull together, pool resources and work collaboratively. With coalitions of community leaders assessing, planning and evaluating their own economic and educational health and envisioning what their youth need for success in life after school, community collaboration may be able to identify and remove the barriers that block young people from fulfilling their promise.

Recognizing that the entire community is affected by the success or failure of its young people, community members can identify youth needs, marshal resources and articulate goals and activities to meet those needs. How are other communities accomplishing this? How successful have they been? What are the stumbling blocks? Who must take leadership roles?

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Education, employment opportunity and poverty are intricately mixed. Unless the nation is prepared to "write off" a large segment of the potential workforce, a concerted effort must be made to neutralize the disadvantages many young people bring to school and, later, to employment.

As new waves of educational change continue, several weaknesses in reform efforts have become apparent. Piecemeal and fragmented approaches are still too common. Rather than addressing the root causes of the problems and taking a systemic approach, reformers have responded to the symptoms. As a result, there has been little real change. What resources and conditions are required for systemic change? Are educators willing to rethink the ways in which education is delivered? What other community groups need to be part of systemic reform? How does change within the school system affect the labor market and employment opportunities?

SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

The transition from school to work is the crisis point of the youth employment problem. The preparation that has gone before and the potential for productive employment hinge on a smooth and purposeful transition to the workforce.

The phrase "school-to-work transition" implies that there is one direct path for all young people that leads them from the classroom into the workplace. In fact, the traditional route for youth—completing school and then entering full-time employment—has given way to a series of variations reflecting the needs and conditions of youth in our society today.

The transition process must become the coordinated responsibility of school, family, work, mass media and government.

As a result, the transition process must become the coordinated responsibility of school, family, work, mass media and government. No single institution can or should take sole responsibility for the problems of young people, and no one institution should be expected to provide all the solutions. What skills and knowledge are necessary to enter the workforce successfully? How are they best acquired? Do closer relationships among schools, businesses and community institutions have a measurable effect on employment success?

MEASUREMENTS AND CREDENTIALS

To evaluate the community's capacity to prepare its young people for the workforce, it is necessary to devise appropriate measures of outcomes. Communities need to track the progress of their young people, while also following improvements in school-to-work transition over time. Are programs meeting the needs of the community? How can we measure success and failure? Are improvements in the dropout and unemployment rates accurate indications of program success?

It is also important to measure the acquired skills and capacities of individual students. Are there ways to provide students with credentials that accurately reflect their capabilities in the employment market? What are the proper tests (performance-based, competency-based) for providing meaningful credentials? What kinds of credentials do employers find most useful?

WE HELD HEARINGS AND HEARD TESTIMONY from planners and participants in four cities which had demonstrated a commitment to and understanding of education reform—Boston, Massachusetts; Miami, Florida; Louisville, Kentucky; and Portland, Oregon.

The purpose was to explore current attitudes toward youth education-work issues and, in the simplest terms, to address a fundamental question regarding the school-to-work transition: **What works in these communities?**

Initiatives at the local level must progress simultaneously in the community, in the workplace and in the school.

The vast majority of these community efforts focus on helping the large group of young people "in the middle"—between the 10 percent who are at "very high risk" and the fortunate ones at the other end of the spectrum who have adequate support systems in their homes, schools and communities to make the transition to economic self-sufficiency.

Initiatives at the local level to address the education and work needs of youth must progress simultaneously in three interdependent spheres: in the community as a whole, in the workplace and in the school. It is a problem of complex origins and daunting scope. In a community of 100,000, the estimated number of young people who encounter difficulty moving from high school to work is between 500 and 700 per year; in a city of one-half million, 2,500 to 3,500 youth experience such problems.

Furthermore, there are no easy solutions or quick fixes. For example, most communities are unwilling or financially unable to consider the major institutional and systemic changes required to serve the education-work needs of "very high risk" youth.

On the following pages, we profile the responses of these cities to youth education-work needs, highlighting both successes and shortcomings. Then, we summarize the experiences across these communities and draw from them lessons learned and recommendations. The final section presents our action plan for other communities, the Community Youth Transition Program, that grew out of these findings.

It is our hope that this strategy will help community leaders across the nation to make youth education and employment their business.

THE EXPERIENCE IN FOUR CITIES

BUSINESS PEOPLE, PARENTS, government representatives, teachers, school administrators and young people shared experiences regarding the transition from school to work when the Academy's NIWL held public hearings in Boston, Miami, Louisville and Portland with support from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

These four cities were selected because they have gone further than most in experimenting with new patterns of cooperation and collaboration in meeting youth employment needs, particularly in the area of business, government and school partnerships.

■ BOSTON: A COMPACT OF SCHOOLS AND BUSINESS

The Boston Compact was a ground-breaking effort on the part of Boston's schools and businesses to assure job opportunities for high school graduates. The goal of the Compact was to increase the level

of graduates' qualifications and provide employment opportunities to draw upon these increased competencies.

Chief executives of local corporations originated the concept of building a partnership between schools and businesses in the community. School and business leaders met monthly under the auspices of the Private Industry Council (PIC), which became an accepted neutral forum for communications among all participating groups. The Boston PIC was charged with implementing the vision of the Compact, but it could not have succeeded without the financial and moral support of the Vault, a group of Boston's top 25 CEOs who met monthly in private.

The heart of the Boston Compact is a formal agreement among the School Department, members of the business community, area colleges and universities and trade unions. Under the original agreement, the business community promised to hire 400 June, 1983, graduates for permanent jobs and to raise that number to 1,000 students within two years if the students could meet entry-level requirements.

The heart of the Boston Compact is a formal agreement among the School Department, the business community, area colleges and universities and trade unions.

Businesses collaborated with the Boston PIC to expand school-to-work transition programs and pledged to recruit 300 companies by 1984 to participate in a priority hiring program for high school graduates. For its part, the School Department pledged to reduce high school absentee and dropout rates by five percent annually, implement increased academic standards and improve college and job placement rates by five percent per year.

In 1985, Boston trade unions agreed to set aside five percent of their apprenticeships annually for qualified high school graduates, while 25 local higher education institutions agreed to enroll 25 percent more Boston public school graduates by 1988, provide increased student aid and help the schools upgrade their college preparatory curriculum.

IN THE FIRST PHASE of the Boston experiment, absenteeism and dropout rates proved intransigent, and achievement levels did not improve measurably. Employers felt they had lived up to their side of the bargain of providing opportunities and, as a result, did not agree to continue the Compact—renewed as Compact II—until the school system and the Boston Teachers Union committed to a contract incorporating school-based management and school-based accountability. In addition, Compact II's goals include increasing parental involvement in education and training programs, development of a follow-up program that assists students for up to four years after graduation, reducing the dropout rate by 50 percent and increasing the number of alternative education programs for dropouts.

Boston's community schools and other alternative education programs serve about 1,300 school dropouts each year but many more are turned away due to lack of funding. One alternative high school program serves 270 out-of-school 16- to 21-year-olds in 11 neighborhood sites. An alternative middle school program serves 12- to 15-year-old dropouts at three sites and an after-school tutoring program enrolls 800 public elementary school students.

Almost all of the young people in these programs are considered in desperate need of comprehensive support services. Recently, a number of health centers agreed to provide health care, counseling and educational testing services on-site at the alternative centers to better serve the total needs of each student. Yet, lack of funding continues to plague the Boston community schools' efforts.

THE BOSTON COMPACT'S STRENGTHS have been the pledging of jobs by the local business community and the Compact's success in organizing the labor market for inner-city youth. Nine hundred Boston firms participated in a summer jobs program, hiring 3,316 students at an average wage of $6.08 an hour. An additional 583 companies hired more than 1,000 graduates through the Career Services program at an average wage of $5.43 an hour. A follow-up survey of the class of 1988 showed that 66 percent of whites, 58 percent of African-Americans and 71 percent of Hispanics were employed, figures that are considerably higher than the national average.

The successful Career Services program helps students put together "package deals" that combine education and work. School performance determines whether students are eligible for getting and staying in a job. Career Specialists in each high school, paid by the PIC, play an important brokering role for young people who otherwise have little access to the labor market.

To make the program more attractive, Boston employers have committed to provide entry-level jobs to qualified high school graduates and have made a special effort to place these young people with larger, institutional employers, jobs they would probably not be able to get on their own. The reported high placement rate, particularly among those who were considered disadvantaged students, is impressive. The unemployment rate of male and female African-American graduates is currently far below the national average.

A companion program—Jobs for Youth-Boston—specializes in alternative education, job placement and counseling services for dropouts and at-risk youth. It also offers an innovative youth entrepreneurship program, the Youth Business Initiative, which relies heavily on the use of mentors from the business community.

The Boston Compact's strengths have been the pledging of jobs by the local business community and organizing the labor market for inner-city youth.

The program trains young people to start and manage their own businesses and provides start-up funds.

During the first year of operation, each young entrepreneur is supplied with two mentors from the business community; one advises on financial and general management concerns, while the other provides hands-on experience.

The program provides students with a support structure of caring, concerned adults who act as advocates, advisors and friends.

THE CASE MANAGEMENT APPROACH embodied in the Boston Compact Ventures program is particularly innovative. Designed to help at-risk ninth graders stay in school, the program relies upon student support teams responsible for education coordination, case management, outreach, remediation and jobs and career exploration. This approach links at-risk students with a team of adults to ease the transition from middle school to high school.

Each Compact Ventures school program has three staff members responsible for addressing students' needs on a case-by-case basis. They make referrals to health, social, legal and community services, as well as to school-based tutoring and counseling activities. The program provides participating students with a support structure of caring, concerned adults who act as advocates, advisors and friends to youngsters who lack such a stable presence elsewhere in their lives.

As noted earlier, Boston entered a new phase when it unveiled Compact II, which emphasizes both involving parents in their children's education and employment and improving the quality of teaching. The first goal of Compact II is to work with teachers, parents, principals and headmasters on implementing school-based management in the public schools. Compact II also demands greater accountability on the part of the schools for student performance and results.

MEMBERS OF THE BOSTON COMPACT use statistics on students' post-high school performance to evaluate the success of the program. With the signing of Compact II, the PIC is responsible for tracking all participants for at least one year beyond high school completion or leaving. Measurements to date include: status of Boston Public School graduates six months after graduation; graduate, summer and after-school job placements; enrollment of BPS graduates in apprenticeship programs; year-by-year documentation of the percentage of BPS graduates enrolled in post-secondary education six months after graduation; follow-up of BPS graduates enrolled in 16 Boston colleges from freshman to senior years; numbers of 12th graders who passed the Degrees of Reading Test required for graduation; student scores by percentile on the Metropolitan Reading and Math Achievement Test; cumulative dropout rate; and annual dropout rate by race.

■ LOUISVILLE: BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT, SCHOOL AS PARTNERS

Students who participate in Louisville's Education and Employment Partnership sign an agreement indicating their willingness to achieve 95 percent attendance in school, improve grades and meet employer expectations. In turn, the Partnership agrees to help the students find meaningful part-time, summer and full-time jobs.

Louisville's Partnership may be among the more successful business-government-school alliances, although early results are still somewhat mixed. The Partnership comprises the City of Louisville, Jefferson County Government, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), the Private Industry Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the University of Louisville.

The stated mission of the Partnership is to "develop and implement a jobs program that will encourage students to stay in school, raise academic achievement levels and provide employment at graduation and/or through post-secondary education." Many of those involved in the Partnership work closely with the JCPS/Gheens Professional Development Academy, providing an ongoing exchange of information and ideas.

Job development planners serve in high schools as career specialists, helping students achieve in school and prepare for the working world.

JOB DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS serve in each of 21 high schools as career specialists, helping students achieve in school and prepare for and enter the working world. Annual measurements of goals for attendance, classroom achievements, reductions in the dropout rate and job placements have been implemented, and the results from the Partnership's first year of implementation have shown improvement in each of the major areas.

Formed in 1989, the Louisville Chamber's Education and Workforce Committee was intended to deal specifically with issues of workforce education and training. With more than 300 people from 200 organizations volunteering time to work on industry subcommittees or task forces, the Committee (now known as the Kentuckiana Education and Workforce Institute, or KEWI) shaped a new vision for the future of education and training in the community. The plan is based on developing new strategic alliances and building a community infrastructure to manage the short- and long-term growth of a flexible and educated workforce. As part of its activities, KEWI will:

- assess present and future workforce needs and the current capabilities of education and training providers to meet them;
- develop a consensus in the community about future education and training programs and broker the development of new or expanded programs as needed;

- provide information on workforce readiness, emerging needs and innovative developments to education and training providers, area businesses and economic development agencies; and

- report annually to the community on the state of education and training in support of a dynamic area economy.

KEWI is developing a new paradigm for basic skills, based on findings of an employer survey and extensive discussions. Developing basic skills for the workplace is the responsibility of elementary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions and employers. Areas of basic skills have been identified: human languages; intellectual skills; technologies; and personal, interpersonal and intercultural skills. One of KEWI's task forces is addressing the application of these basic skills in education and training settings.

Cooperation between the JCPS, the Jefferson County Teachers Association and the Gheens Foundation resulted in the establishment of the JCPS/Gheens Professional Development Academy. The Development Academy's guiding vision is that the continuing professional development of individuals and groups should be related directly to school improvement and be based on a continuing review of state-of-the-art knowledge about teaching, learning and organizational effectiveness.

"Change that happens to you is frightening; change that you're involved in is exhilarating."

Rather than focus on individual schools or specific grade levels, the Development Academy is the infrastructure that links professional development to systemic school improvement. Teachers have been involved actively in every step of planning and implementation. As the head of the Jefferson County Teachers Association phrased it: "Change that happens to you is frightening; change that you're involved in is exhilarating."

In addition, there has been a marked shift toward school-based management in the school system. Currently, 96 schools are involved in participatory management, Louisville's term for shared decision-making/school-based management.

TO EXPEDITE COLLABORATION, the Gheens Foundation hired an outside consultant to work with all sectors of the community in implementing a systemic approach to school reform. This consultant facilitated communication among all the parties involved and was considered essential to fostering the Development Academy's "symbiotic and mutually reinforcing relationship" with other major private-public partnerships, including the Louisville Partnership.

The Louisville public schools have undertaken an initiative in vocational education that is developing new approaches to technical and career education. It includes such elements as identifying and

building on students' strengths and talents from their earliest years, offering rich experiences in career exploration as part of middle-school learning and developing a group of magnet career academies.

These career academies offer an integrated curriculum of basic skills and career proficiencies through both classroom and experiential activities. Faculty/industry exchanges, co-op and intern programs, joint academy-industry-university teaming and assistance with placement in entry-level jobs are essential elements of these academies. Among their career areas are health, manufacturing, transportation and building technologies and hospitality services.

One high school offers an aviation magnet program. Students apply as eighth graders with a required minimum GPA. In grades 9 and 10, students take academic courses and explore a variety of aviation-related careers and requisite skills. In the 11th and 12th grades, students continue their classwork while preparing for a specialty, such as avionics technician, air traffic controller, pilot, aircraft mechanic or passenger-care person. The curriculum, which has been approved by the FAA, is offered with the assistance of the FAA, UPS, Standiford and Bowman Fields, the Civil Air Patrol, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and other local employers.

Typical of the vocational schools in each of the communities, the Ahrens Vocational Center in Louisville operated until 1977 as a graduating high school with each student completing a trade in addition to normal graduation requirements. Since then, Ahrens has operated as an area vocational education center, sharing students with 25 home high schools across the county. Students choose from 13 traditional vocational programs, with support programs for those with special needs. Ahrens attempts to provide each student with a cooperative education experience during the senior year.

WORK SIMULATIONS TEACH STUDENTS about careers and make curricula work-relevant. K-Mart, Sears, Kroger and Winn-Dixie help elementary school students learn about the importance of good work, attendance, behavior, nutrition and economics through a mini-store in the classroom.

At the high school level, six Jefferson County schools opened in-school banking and finance centers. The centers, developed by First National Bank of Louisville, offer all students and teachers the opportunity to open accounts, apply for loans and transact other business. Students taking banking or accounting courses serve as the bank's officers and employees.

Project Succeed is a drop-out prevention program which offers at-risk students tutoring, counseling and performance incentives such as summer jobs and field trips. Middle and high school students

Elementary school students learn about good work, attendance, behavior, nutrition and economics through a mini-store in the classroom.

with low attendance, failing grades or high suspensions are identified for participation.

A project facilitator at each of 11 participating schools meets with students daily, helps with classwork and advises them on personal problems. Volunteer mentors from among the business sponsors work with the facilitator to improve students' academic performance, attendance and discipline. Project Succeed is sponsored by First National Bank and South Central Bell.

As part of its systemic approach to school improvement, Louisville is in the process of developing new measurements for a full evaluation of its efforts, building on survey data, case studies and an analysis of programs and activities. Both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected from the start of the project and will form the basis for ongoing evaluation. The Gheens Foundation provided funds earmarked specifically for evaluation, believing that systemic change for school improvement demands both regular monitoring and a comprehensive final evaluation.

The Portland Investment is a master plan to provide comprehensive services to youth from prenatal care through age 21.

■ PORTLAND: A MASTER PLAN TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

In October 1984, community leaders in Portland, including the mayor, the chair of the Private Industry Council, the school superintendent, the city commissioner, business leaders, organized labor, the school board and higher education representatives, convened the Leaders Roundtable. Its goal was to stimulate long-term structural change to improve employment opportunities for youth, reduce fragmentation of services, and reduce or eliminate barriers to employment.

The Roundtable developed the Portland Investment, a master plan to provide a comprehensive system of services to youth from prenatal care through age 21. The Portland Investment has endowed a range of programs for young people.

Education for Oregon's Future (EFOF) is an interesting variation of the school-business partnership concept. Oregon students sign an agreement with their employer and a school official to maintain regular attendance at school and workplace, maintain proper work habits, consult with the employer about any classroom difficulties and provide adequate notice of the need to miss work for school-related activities. Participating employers agree to employ students who are enrolled in an accepted high school completion program and to stress the importance of graduating.

The Cooperative Work Experience Program (CWEP) places students in school-arranged part-time positions with selected employers. The

CWEP programs are initiated by the individual high schools, with business teachers and vocational educators working with the school's work-experience coordinator. Portland students praised their CWEP experience, which is based on the traditional cooperative education model.

THE PORTLAND INVESTMENT SUPPORTS a range of other programs including: BRIDGE, which offers pre-employment training, work exploration seminars and summer-school basic skills classes for eighth graders who are behind in math and reading; CARE, an alternative program for 11th and 12th graders who learn more effectively in non-traditional settings; The Registry, through which the business community can reward low-income and minority high school juniors and seniors with scholarships for continuing education after graduation; Student Service Center, a case management model in three middle schools that coordinates service delivery to at-risk students and their families; and the Youth Employment Institute, which offers basic skills training, GED training and testing and specific skill training to out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 and 21.

BRIDGE offers pre-employment training, work exploration seminars and summer-school basic skills classes for eighth graders.

In addition, the Portland PIC's Comprehensive Youth Employment Program embraces a Summer Youth Employment Program, the Summer Training and Education Program and a pre-employment program for homeless youth.

The Financial Services Academy at Jefferson High School is a three-year program for selected at-risk 11th and 12th graders who have the potential to succeed in the financial services field. Organized as a "school within a school," the program includes revised English and math curricula reflecting applied skills in finance-related jobs, financial services business classes, in-depth job explorations in financial businesses and mentors from the business community. Students are assisted in finding summer jobs with financial companies and provided job opportunities upon graduation.

The Portland Investment's Teen Parent Program provides a variety of services including: a mentoring program, special summer employment and training programs, targeted parenting education classes, day-care assistance, counseling, interagency case management and school liaisons in seven schools. Since 1986, 435 teen parents have participated.

SEVERAL KEY FEATURES of the Portland experience are embodied in, and others are affected by, the statutory reforms adopted by the Oregon legislature in 1991. Drawing on both the Portland program and the June 1990 recommendations of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (National Center on Education and the

Economy), Oregon adopted a series of rules to become effective in the 1995-1996 school year.

The rules will: (1) require all tenth graders to take a test leading to a "certificate of initial mastery," (2) require passage of the test as a virtual condition of advanced education, (3) provide "alternative learning centers" for those young people who fail the test, (4) extend the school year and (5) expand the Head Start program to include all children who need it. Although many details remain to be worked out, the Oregon legislation has launched a statewide effort to meet its youth undereducation and unemployment problems.

■ MIAMI: AN ARRAY OF COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Dade County Public Schools has adopted a wide range of business advisory councils and collaborative projects within the Miami community. Owing to the dedication and commitment of a former superintendent of schools, the community effort reflects an excellent collaborative relationship among school board members, administrators and teachers.

In most of its initiatives, Dade County relied on new organizational structures that stress cooperation, shared responsibility for reaching agreed-upon goals and shared resources and expertise. School officials made a vigorous effort to reach out to employers and service agencies and attracted broad support.

From the outset, the superintendent's office, the school board and United Teachers of Dade worked closely to implement school-based management, a concept supported by both national teachers' unions, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. Dade County Public Schools is currently in the fifth year of its pilot school-based management/shared decision-making project. Starting in 1987 with 32 schools, it grew to 170 of 270 schools in the past school year.

In the Partners in Education (PIE) program, Dade County Public Schools works jointly with United Teachers of Dade, the Urban League of Greater Miami, Miami-Dade Community College and the Wolfson Foundation to improve minority student retention and achievement in its Miami Northwestern Senior High School feeder schools (nine elementary and two junior high schools). School-based management was implemented in all of the schools.

Dade County relied on new organizational structures that stress cooperation, shared responsibility and shared resources and expertise.

AT THE SUGGESTION OF PARENTS and teachers, each of the schools began a program to contact and work with potential students even before entry to kindergarten. One of the PIE schools developed the Saturday School program, currently offered in more than 60 schools, which provides an opportunity for students to improve math and

reading skills in a less formal atmosphere. Classes are also offered to parents (including GED and community college courses). Approximately 8,500 students were served by PIE in 1987-1988.

In Miami, there are a variety of high school magnet programs in international business and finance, tourism and the arts.

Magnet schools designed to respond to particular student interests are being developed in more and more communities; it is a concept that has been carried far in Miami. In addition to a series of magnet elementary schools, there are a variety of high school magnet programs in international business and finance, tourism and the arts.

The Florida Academy of Travel and Tourism is one of several model programs developed by the National Academy Foundation, whose goal is to encourage and support partnerships between business and education to strengthen the preparedness of the American workforce. The Florida Academy is a two-year program for high school juniors and seniors, with a special curriculum designed by educators and industry experts. All students are offered a paid summer internship with a business in order to gain practical experience and apply classroom learning. Success in this program encourages many of the participants who had not considered continuing their education after high school to go on to college.

Miami also has developed a MAST Academy (Marine and Scientific Technology High School) which enrolls about 400 students in grades nine to 12 who are interested in marine employment prospects. Business and community organizations provide individual mentors where they are needed and assist in coordinating job and college placements.

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM at Miami's Jackson Senior High School reflects administrative ingenuity and courage. It prepares students for entry-level positions in the criminal justice field. Officers from the Miami Police Department and Juvenile Justice Center and the Miami Dade Community College cooperate with Jackson High School teachers and administrators in designing special courses and programs specifically to get rebellious students back on track. Students with a history of discipline problems are encouraged to enroll in the program, and many do.

Through the Educational Alternative Outreach Program, special training and educational opportunities are offered to 600 high school students in detention centers (mainly residential), temporary shelters for abused and neglected children, drug/alcohol rehabilitation centers and alternative programs for youth who are at high risk of dropping out or are referred to the program as an alternative to expulsion. Each center offers a standard academic program, with an emphasis on basic skills.

The Killian After-School-Hours (KASH) program allows students who find it difficult to attend day classes to remain in school while working. The program consists of a combination of regular day classes, afternoon/evening classes and a flexible employment sched-

ule. Students remain on the rolls of the day school, earn a standard diploma and receive credits for on-the-job training.

All KASH students are assigned a teacher-"coach" who checks daily to make sure that they are in class and on the job. The coach maintains close contact with the student's parents and employer and serves as an advisor, disciplinarian and friend to each student. A number of KASH students and their parents emphasized that, without this personalized attention to their work and schooling, the students would have dropped out.

Neighbors Involved in Kids' Education (NIKE) is a cooperative effort of the Dade County Department of Education, high school clubs, churches, parent/teacher associations and civic groups to provide after-school programs for children in 4th through 8th grades. Miami's Jackson Senior High School provides day care (the Little Generals Nursery School) for student mothers. In this program, approximately a dozen children are cared for by other students as part of their training to be child-care aides. The trainees' hands-on experience is incorporated into a broader educational program that includes the student mothers.

The Career Laboratory is a physical space set aside for career simulation activities where students are exposed to a broad range of careers at all levels.

PRE-SCHOOL CARE IS PART of an innovative system of Satellite Learning Centers set up in Miami by the Dade County Public Schools and several different private corporations. K-to-2 instruction is offered to children at corporate day-care centers. The school system provides the teachers; the corporation is responsible for the facilities and other needs.

Miami's Career Awareness Laboratory Program, funded jointly by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and Dade County elementary school principals, promotes career awareness for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. The Career Laboratory is a physical space set aside for career simulation activities where students are exposed to a broad range of comprehensive career areas at all levels, from the professions to the trades, and from skilled to semi-skilled. The curriculum emphasizes careers and work attitudes in the broadest sense. The program serves 6,000 students in 40 laboratories across the county.

IN EXAMINING THE ACTIONS and experiences in Miami, Portland, Louisville and Boston, we sought to isolate directions and potential solutions for the crisis of youth employment in order to help other communities learn from these efforts. The following chapter, "Lessons Learned: A View Across the Communities," describes the commonality of experience found across the four cities—one that illuminates an emerging consensus regarding the inter-related roles of education and work in the lives of American youth.

LESSONS LEARNED: A VIEW ACROSS THE COMMUNITIES

THE PRIMARY LESSON OFFERED by the experiences of these four communities is that **substantial change is possible**. In our judgment, this consensus is expressed most effectively by the specific communities, so we have allowed their experiences largely to speak for themselves.

Many of the lessons already have been absorbed into something approaching conventional wisdom. The conviction in the communities, and our belief as well, is that neither society nor the economy can withstand the continued underdevelopment of one-half of our human resources. Nor can we continue to tolerate the fact that every year 300,000 young people come of age seemingly destined to be lifelong wards of the community.

In drawing a composite of four cities' experiments and accomplishments over a period of years, we acknowledge the risk of creating the illusion that the education-work problem is diminishing. Because new and highly publicized forms of cooperation between

schools and employers have been developed, people may believe that the ways and means for a solution have been found.

Schools must earn and retain the support of the community—parents, teachers, labor, government and business.

But the architects of the initiatives in Boston, Miami, Louisville and Portland are among the first to question whether their efforts have even kept pace with the intensification of the problem. Advancing technology and the general economic slowdown continue to shrink the number of jobs available to young people with limited education. Each year, more young people, particularly the disadvantaged, confront bleak job prospects.

Looking carefully but critically at these four sets of experiences, nevertheless, helps identify the elements of approaches that offer substantial promise. The instruction comes almost as much from what has not worked very well as from what has.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

As noted at the outset, we selected the four communities for study because of their initiatives in developing new relationships among local agencies and institutions. Because such efforts frequently fail, special attention was given to any signs in these four cities of prospective weakening of the collaboration fabric. None was found. To the contrary, experience in the four communities underscores the fact that **school programs alone cannot provide young people with the necessary guidance and support**. Schools must earn and retain the support of the community—parents, teachers, labor, government and business.

Strong, active leadership is a crucial ingredient in the success of collaborative initiatives in the four communities. This leadership emerged from different sectors. In Boston, leaders came from the business community. In Miami, the office of the superintendent of schools pushed initiatives on behalf of students and reached out for community support. Louisville's program resulted from the combined efforts of the school superintendent, a local private foundation and the Chamber of Commerce. In Portland, a coalition of civic leaders established the Leaders Roundtable, which served as a stimulus for further efforts.

Private Industry Councils (PICs) played a crucial role in all four cities. The Boston PIC served as the nucleus around which the Boston Compact developed. In Portland, the PIC participated in founding The Portland Investment and served as a partner in the Youth Employment Institute and the Comprehensive Youth Employment Program. In Louisville and in Miami, the PICs linked private-sector employers to training and placement of disadvantaged youth and adults.

Local Private Industry Councils have been pivotal in establishing effective collaborative relationships in all four of these communities. There is substantial debate over whether the composition of these Councils contributes somehow to this effectiveness. It probably does not. What is most significant is the indication that there can be effective public/private cooperation.

As support grew for these initial efforts, collaboration among community sectors broadened. All four communities established **new structures** charged with making policy, developing a community vision, designing programs and services and overseeing implementation. In all cases, these required the **substantive involvement and commitment of multiple groups and individuals**, including school administrators, teachers, employers and representatives of local government and service organizations. Communities implemented new mechanisms to apportion responsibilities and improve communications among participating groups and individuals.

A significant faction of the workforce of the future will need to be recruited largely from youth who are not college-bound and not dropouts.

THE EXPERIENCES OF THE FOUR CITIES demonstrate that the effectiveness of community efforts depends on **permanent and adequately staffed change agencies** at the local community level. It will be critically important to develop in other communities counterparts of the Boston Compact, the Louisville Education and Workforce Committee, the Portland Investment and the Miami Partners in Education. Equally important is the Louisville precedent of bringing in at the outset a professional consultant (change agent) to work with all sectors of the community in addressing the problems.

Effective collaborative programs can be established and maintained in communities that share the general characteristics of the four profiled here, particularly with respect to size. It is unclear whether comparable efforts would work in the nation's largest cities, and less formal arrangements might be at least as effective in smaller communities.

The permanence of any collaborative structure, according to prevailing views in the communities, probably will depend on the availability of governmental financing. Another essential ingredient to effective collaboration is the growing awareness within the business community that a significant faction of the workforce of the future will need to be recruited largely from youth who are not college-bound and not dropouts. Business has discovered its common cause with education.

Collaborative programs implemented so far appear to fall short of a final solution. Many community planners are aware they have not gone far enough, either programmatically or institutionally. In particular, communities have fallen behind in attempts to combat

youth maladjustment and the breakdown of family support. The forces bearing most directly on the youth employment crisis—deteriorating family support structures and the changing demands of the workplace—are in large measure beyond the reach of the schools and require more than the schools can provide.

The decisive factor in each of the communities has been the willingness of a small group of individuals to put their civic idealism to work.

Despite the efforts being implemented in each of the four communities, no substantial evidence was found in any of them of general public awareness that one out of 10 young people lacks the means to become a self-supporting adult. Reciting statistics on teenage pregnancies, the increasing percentage of young people in jail or on parole or pardon, and the effects of these realities on employability leads to sympathetic "tongue-clucking" and little else.

The implicit lesson is sobering. The task of addressing the multiple problems of educating the less advantaged half of the youth population cannot count on widespread public support. In fact, the decisive factor in each of the communities has been the willingness of a small group of individuals to put their civic idealism to work. The directions and strategies set forth in Boston Compact II and by the Louisville Education and Workforce Committee point to the stronger medicine that is needed.

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

• **School-Based Reform Efforts.** It is apparent that the schools—elementary and secondary—will continue as the key action agencies in carrying out most programs, even when the collaboration element is added. But in many areas, the schools are failing large numbers of children. Experience in the communities shows that the effectiveness of schools can be improved by placing **more responsibility in the hands of the teachers and principals.** This increases the emphasis on nurturing teacher competence through rewards and training.

In all four cities, education improvement was tied both to **structural changes at the school level** and to **improving teacher participation in implementing change and accountability.** To varying degrees, teachers and principals in each community are more responsible for change, working closely with central administration. Sixty-three percent of the Dade County schools are participating in school-based initiatives developed on the assumption that teachers excluded from planning and implementation lack enthusiasm about innovation, no matter how competent and conscientious the top management. The long-term results of shared decision-making at this scale have yet to be fully evaluated. In addition, planners in Miami emphasize teachers' professional development.

Perhaps the most important lesson learned through the JCPS/Gheens Professional Development Academy's activities in Louisville

is that structural change in complex organizations requires **time**. If transformations are to occur in American elementary and secondary education, long-term investments are critical at federal, state and local levels—by both private organizations and public agencies. Quick fixes will not work. **No single model of excellence has all the answers for all the schools.**

•**School-Business Partnerships.** The underlying, often unarticulated, assumption in the four communities is that high school teachers can handle the needs of college-bound students on their own but that students going directly from high school into employment will be served best by partnerships between schools and employers.

As the experience in Boston, Portland and Louisville demonstrates, **structuring the entry-level job market** requires the collaboration of business, government and schools to build a credible bridge between school and work. With the cooperation of employers, opportunities can be made available for workers to participate in on-site basic skills programs and more specialized training on the job. Employers could contribute workers' time, training space and even funding. The private sector has the opportunity to play a crucial role in structuring not only job opportunities but also learning opportunities for young people who now face very bleak futures.

In Louisville, Miami and Portland, **occupation and work specialists** provided by the business community are assigned to every high school, but enrollments often exceed 2,000 students. These individuals are expected to link students seeking work with existing jobs, while providing all career-awareness and career-development activities for the schools. Job-placement secretaries in Portland each serve between 1,000 and 1,300 students, providing career counseling, job placement and occupational information. Placing job/work specialists in the high schools is an encouraging trend, but at present there are too few to serve the most needy.

Boston's Career Services program, a guidance and brokerage service with close ties to the business community, has made great strides in meeting the employment needs of disadvantaged students. As a direct result of this program, the unemployment rate of male and female African-American graduates has declined and is currently far lower in Boston than the national average. Based on this success in helping inner-city young people make the transition to employment, 12 other cities were chosen by the National Alliance of Business to develop similar local collaborative agreements.

The private sector has the opportunity to play a crucial role in structuring not only job opportunities but also learning opportunities for young people.

•**Vocational Education.** Each of the four communities was examined for its degree of reliance on vocational education. What we found was only moderately encouraging. The career-academics approach being developed in Louisville might serve as a model for

rethinking the larger goals and purposes of vocational education. But, in general, the school reform movement does not appear to have significantly influenced the traditional goals and purposes of vocational education, which remains closely identified with the manufacturing economy of the 1950s.

The experience in the communities suggests that **vocational education is resisting reconfiguration** to meet the demands of service-information/high-technology employment. Vocational education programs in the most disadvantaged schools remain significantly inferior.

In spite of the concern that renewed emphasis on workplace skills would detract from the schools' focus on "the basics"—reading, writing and mathematics—experience in the four communities suggests that this is not the case. Basic skills are equally important to young people going to college and to those who are not. Similarly, a basic understanding of language, math, geography, history, science and art enables all students to be more effective citizens. The four communities have initiated programs to strengthen "the basics" curriculum for all students, particularly those who are disadvantaged, while increasing students' exposure to meaningful work/career-oriented educational programs.

The communities have strengthened "the basics" curriculum for all students, while increasing students' exposure to meaningful work/ career-oriented educational programs.

One of the principal successes in the four communities has been the development of **alternative curricula** for students who are not going to college immediately and who already have developed particular career interests. There was consensus that all high school students benefit to some degree from work/career-oriented education and training but that students going directly from high school to the workforce require a more substantial and systematic exposure. To a high degree in Miami, less in Louisville and Boston, and least in Portland, high school curricula have been redesigned to provide special training for students who have elected to go directly to the workforce.

•**Magnet Schools.** The success of **magnet and alternative schools** has stimulated substantial changes in the four communities. There is evidence that students with disadvantaged backgrounds are staying longer in magnet schools, achieving more and graduating with the skills to pursue job ambitions or postsecondary education.

Magnet schools are one attempt to create a new balance in the curriculum, one that will more fully integrate basic skills and personal interests with the demands of the workplace. There is a growing consensus that the educational shortcomings of our high schools affect all students, including those who are college-bound. But, in particular, the opportunities within secondary education for those students who are not college-bound are woefully inadequate. To

meet the needs of these students, **secondary education must be revised.** Indeed, a major overhaul is required.

In his analysis, *A Place Called School*, John Goodlad suggests "a completely reconstructed system of general education beginning at four and ending at sixteen" in which the general education program would "be fused with hands-on activities of many kinds relating to and motivating academic work." This would be followed by a system of "programs of community and national service and technical training" devised for 16- to 18-year olds not going on to college. We should demand that secondary education effectively serve all students, not just those who are most likely to succeed.

•**High School-College Collaborations.** In general, planners in the four cities agree that postsecondary education should serve all high school students equally, regardless of whether they are headed for college or directly into employment. In some cases, this challenge has been addressed through **high school and community college or technical school partnerships** in which postsecondary offerings are more closely tied to high school courses. These experiments are building upon the tech-prep associate degree model, referred to as "2 plus 2," in which students receive academic and technical training in the final two years of high school, followed by two years of postsecondary study. The curriculum is supplemented with career training throughout the four years, relying on input from the business sector. Employers often help design and administer these programs.

Planners in the four cities agree that postsecondary education should serve all high school students equally, whether they are headed for college or employment.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

School-to-work transition has received the highest priority in the four communities. Initiatives in this area have taken many and varied forms, although progress has been uneven. The most fully developed efforts were found in Boston's Career Services program and Portland's successful cooperative education program. However, the potential for innovation and collaboration in this promising area hardly has been tested.

•**Career Guidance and Counseling.** The need to **expand career guidance and counseling** for students in danger of dropping out and for those going directly from high school to employment is generally recognized in the communities, but relatively little progress has been made.

One source of the problem is the high student/counselor ratio in the schools. Louisville's middle and high schools have a student/counselor ratio of 450:1. In Miami, the secondary school student to counselor ratio has been 438:1 for the past 10 years. Portland's ratio,

while somewhat lower at 289:1, still points to a serious shortage of guidance and counseling for all students. The terrible student/counselor ratios in the four communities represent the falsest economy. Local community representatives suggest that the student/counselor ratio for students immediately entering today's complex, bewildering and rapidly changing job market should be no more then 75:1.

In some cases, mentors have stepped in to alleviate the counseling gap. It is clear that **mentoring can be a powerful force** in the lives of young people and a useful adjunct to other counseling approaches. Mentors serve as role models, tutors, informal guidance providers and companions. Programs such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters have been providing such mentors for decades.

Only recently have such efforts been developed in the context of linking education and employment for those most at risk. Mentors from the business community can provide young people with a realistic view of work, support good work habits and attitudes, describe available jobs and careers and stress the importance of education and training beyond high school. Mentoring systems can indeed be institutionalized at the community level, but it is not a simple task and requires careful planning and support.

Some system of credentialing students who are going directly from high school to the workplace would be useful for employers and job applicants.

•**Workforce Readiness.** Young people who choose to go to college are armed with grade averages, college entrance examination scores, transcripts, class standings and letters of recommendation. Since the transition to a service and information-oriented economy began, employers of high school graduates have asked for a reliable way to assess their qualifications. This suggests that some **system of credentialing students** who are going directly from high school to the workplace would be useful for employers and job applicants.

The Educational Testing Service's "Worklink" and "Employment Readiness Profile" programs and the American College Testing "Work Keys" proposal offer substantial merit. At the Academy for Educational Development, the Career Passport developed by the Academy's National Institute for Work and Learning has been implemented in over 30 communities and is being piloted in Louisville's high schools as the basis for a completely revised career development and credentialing system.

The Career Passport is a formal document that identifies, describes and presents a young person's paid and unpaid work experience and marketable skills. Similar to a résumé, it is used to complete job, college or training applications, and generally to assist in job searches. The Career Passport provides improved information for the screening, interviewing and selection process of employers, colleges and training institutions.

•**Outside Work Experience.** Outside work experience for students takes two forms: school-sponsored education-work programs and part-time work experience obtained by students on their own. In all four cities, a large number of high school students, especially 11th and 12th graders, are working outside the school in self-acquired jobs.

Available data indicate that the majority of all high school students in the U.S. are working (primarily in food service establishments) and the number is growing. Many students successfully balance competing demands of work and school. But a large number appear to work long hours either to gratify immediate needs with little consideration for what they will do after they graduate—or drop out because the school curriculum does not seem relevant preparation for the workplace.

It is generally assumed that students who are not going to college will be better prepared for employment if they have some kind of work experience while in high school. Students gain skills and work habits, associate with adults and participate in the economic life of the community.

Even some educators say that more work experience is better, but testimony in Boston and Portland, in particular, suggested that outside work is a mixed blessing. Many high school students in these communities work 20 or 30 hours a week, and educators offered evidence that too much work has a negative effect on homework, grades, class participation, extracurricular activities and family and peer relationships.

The work experience for students has been poorly integrated with the school experience.

Teachers suggested that young people working long hours are short-changing themselves and the economy by acquiring fewer marketable skills for long-term employment. In this regard, there seems to be sufficient evidence from the communities to recommend **restricting the number of hours students are allowed to work** during the school year.

But the problem goes deeper. The disagreement among educators over the value of work appears to stem from the fact that the work experience for students has been poorly integrated with the school experience. Programs which strive to blend classroom learning and work experiences, such as "cooperative education," appear unquestionably valuable for young people who are not going directly to college, as documented by the Portland experience. Yet only about three percent of working students are currently enrolled in cooperative education programs. Although several work-based learning programs are operating in the four communities, there is no overall strategy to respond to the growing number of working young people.

The implication is that there ought to be some way to more closely **link students' work experiences with their education.** Nobody and no institution—schools, parents or employers—is in charge of the massive movement of high school students into the part-time employment which they arrange for themselves. The potential advantage of these education/work experiences to both students and employers is being wasted, particularly in light of recent recommendations that these experiences serve as the basis for an expanded apprenticeship system for youth in the U.S.

MEASUREMENTS AND CREDENTIALS

Nobody is in charge of the massive movement of high school students into part-time employment which they arrange for themselves.

All four communities shared an increased interest in and concern for two different aspects of measuring achievements and results: (1) how to determine the effectiveness of remedial programs of various kinds and (2) how to measure individual young people's achievements and competence.

When the first statistics were available to measure the success of the Boston Compact, the collaborative faced a crisis. It was determined that the schools' commitment to reduce student absenteeism and the dropout rate had not been met. On the other hand, the statistics revealed that the business community had lived up to its side of the bargain to provide larger numbers of work opportunities for youth. It was shown that the business side of the education/employment equation could, indeed, be implemented. The schools responded by proposing various program revisions, and a new compact was forged.

But the suspicion lingers that numbers of dropouts do not tell the whole story. In fact, all four communities believe **dropout figures are an inadequate measure of program success or failure**; they tell too little of what needs to be done or what is working.

The other kind of measurement that is recognized as important, but inadequate, is that of competence. Having developed, perhaps to a fault, measurements of individual young people's apparent qualifications for college, little or nothing is available to indicate their likely ability as employees. This has led Oregon to adopt legislation anticipating establishment of a statewide tenth-grade testing program looking toward the granting (or denying) of a "certificate of initial mastery." The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce has called for a nationally established and administered test; that recommendation has been introduced for consideration by Congress.

Of equal importance, although from a different standpoint, are efforts to measure the results of various education-work and human development programs. Miami has demonstrated an increased

retention rate resulting from its magnet schools program. Boston has shown that African-American graduates of the Boston public schools have a better statistical chance of being employed than African-American high school graduates across the country.

Reliable measurement of the effectiveness of various education-work efforts will depend largely upon **longitudinal studies** that follow a meaningful number of students in a particular community from the time they leave school until age 25. Such studies would provide information on the number of students who attend college, seek employment after high school graduation, drop out earlier and hold jobs during high school. These studies would also compare the relative employment success of those who follow college preparation, vocational training or a standard curriculum.

SUMMARY

The architects of school and community innovation and reform in Boston, Louisville, Miami and Portland are clearest and most outspoken about three points:

- their communities cannot tolerate, socially or economically, the waste of an estimated one-half their human resources;
- this prospect makes community-wide action imperative; and
- their efforts so far offer reasonable promise of future successes.

Holding these same views, we at the Academy's National Institute for Work and Learning wish to thank the planners, business people, school administrators, teachers and staff—the civic idealists—in each of these four cities who took the time to share their valuable experiences with us. Much has been accomplished in these communities, but much remains to be done in them and in America for our young people to find true opportunities in school and work.

Communities cannot tolerate the waste of an estimated one-half their human resources.

What follows is a blueprint for community action, designed by the Academy's NIWL, that builds on the emerging consensus and lessons learned from the experiences in the four cities. We present it as a starting point for communities that wish to take responsibility for ensuring that their young people have the education, skills, support and opportunity to make a successful transition to adulthood, productive employment and responsible citizenship.

BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION: COMMUNITY YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM

TO HELP COMMUNITIES SERVE the education-work needs of all students, we propose a Community Youth Transition Program. With coalitions of community leaders assessing, planning and evaluating their own economic and educational health and envisioning what their youth need for success in life after school, purposeful community action can destroy the barriers now blocking young people from fulfilling their promise.

The transition process should be the responsibility of the community's school, family, work, service, mass media and government institutions along with existing community groups and projects, including Private Industry Councils, business and education partnerships, parent organizations and other joint ventures.

To develop a systemic approach to youth transition, these institutions and groups need to work together. Under the umbrella of a collaborative organization, community members can identify youth needs, resources and the goals and activities that will provide answers. Fortunately, some communities are already moving in this direction, as we found in our hearings and interviews around the country. In no two communities are these collaborative organizations likely to have the same configuration or similar name; each community responds to a unique set of goals and circumstances.

The common aim in all of these community efforts—whether under the umbrella of the Boston Compact, the Louisville Education and Employment Partnership, Miami Partners in Education or the Portland Investment—is to build local capacity to assist young people both in making the transition from school to work and/or further education or training and in assuming new adult roles and responsibilities.

Collaboration at the community level provides one of the only ways to bring about long-term and continually evolving systemic change.

The entire community, not just the schools, has a major stake in the success of its young people. Community coalitions, built on shared responsibility, decision-making and accountability, can add a dimension to school innovation and improvement. Their contribution can be significant and lasting: a deliberate and considered focus on youth success as measured by the ability of young people to continue their education, move into the workforce and contribute to family and societal development.

COALITIONS OF CONCERNED CITIZENS can hold their community responsible for the preparation of youth for work and lifelong learning and can bring about systemic change. When responsibilities and decision-making are shared, community members are able to work together for common goals, build trust and define new roles and relationships.

All this takes time. Community collaboration is not a quick solution to the problems of poverty, economic recessions, poor schools or unsuccessful youth. Patience is needed to work through the process and to allow all participants to become part of the decision-making that affects them. Once done, collaboration at the community level provides one of the only ways to bring about long-term and continually evolving systemic change.

Our perspective is that fragmented, institutionally unilateral approaches to youth transition have proven inadequate. The lessons from community experiences leave us convinced that:

- national problem-solving requires community-level participation;

- community participation requires effective processes to create a shared vision, shared understanding, shared responsibility, shared decision-making, shared resources and shared benefits; and

- participants in these processes should include a wide range of community leaders and institutions.

The emphasis here is on **institutional responsibility.** While institutions are only as motivated as the individuals who represent them, we assume that people acting as motivated institutional leaders carry far more clout and promise of sustained impact than if they act as individuals.

Whether establishing a new collaborative entity or building on to an existing organization for the purposes of shared responsibility and decision-making, the same criteria for successful collaboration apply.

First, all parties participate on a voluntary basis; they recognize their own interests in being a participant in the process and are willing to be a part of the larger effort.

Second, all the major players in the transition of youth from education to employment are represented in the coalition, although it may start out as an alliance between educators and employers. School administrators, teachers, postsecondary educators, employers, parents, students, government officials, youth service agencies, labor unions and other appropriate community groups should all be members of the coalition. Without true multi-sector representation, there can be no meaningful shared responsibility or decision-making on a community-wide basis.

Third, each member of the coalition has equal status. To be an effective collaborative body, members must check their "turf protectiveness" at the door, recognizing that each group represented has an equal stake in improving the transition process and outcomes for community youth. The coalition should be viewed as neutral turf where issues, needs, resources and strategies can be identified and acted on in positive ways.

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Fourth, it is essential for members to recognize that other members share converging but independent goals. There will likely be many perspectives on how to define and achieve the desired outcomes, but the aim is to move beyond personal agendas to reach consensus based on shared interests.

Fifth, the coalition is performance-oriented, leading to accomplishments that benefit the community's young people and the organizations represented. While the specific achievements will differ depending on the community's specific needs and resources, the

common thread is that positive action is taken and the excuses for isolation, irresponsible criticism and inaction are removed. All members share equal responsibility for setting priorities, implementing activities and achieving results.

Sixth, the organizational structure will vary, again depending on the community's configuration. Newly established entities must be assured of necessary staff and long-term funding to accomplish the goals that are set.

Finally, once the goals have been met, members share equally in the credit for the coalition's accomplishments.

A skilled change agent can help create and maintain the conditions necessary for community coalitions.

BASED ON THESE CRITERIA, the specific functions of the community coalition would be likely to include:

1. Providing leadership to shape a new vision and higher standards for student success. This new vision will be embodied in a community action plan that sets priorities and responsibilities, assures that resources are commensurate with desired outcomes and appropriately links responsibility and accountability.

2. Developing a careful initial needs assessment, including the mapping of resources available in the community to assist youth transition.

3. Monitoring the effectiveness of youth transition efforts and regularly identifying new needs.

4. Assisting community groups and programs concerned with youth transition to network their resources, including linking schools to the full range of social service agencies.

5. Becoming a center of information about effective youth transition programs in other communities and resources for youth transition activities.

6. Helping the community explore options and raise or reallocate funds to support youth transition programs.

7. Reporting annually to the community on the status and needs of youth transition. This will require the development of innovative and relevant modes of short-term and long-term assessment.

Based on community experience, we believe that creating and maintaining the conditions necessary for community coalitions are facilitated by a skilled change agent. Hired by the coalition, legitimized by the community and unconstrained by local politics and

pressures, the change agent can broker, ask critical questions and bring reluctant community members together into new roles and responsibilities. Change agents can also determine in advance whether local conditions make a coalition feasible.

The function of the change agent proposed here goes beyond the usual technical assistance, monitoring or evaluation responsibilities of an outside consultant and includes a broader mandate to assist the successful implementation of the program through a variety of activities and strategies. The right kind of change agent may make a critical difference in the effective implementation of a youth transition program as part of wider school reform efforts and in the long-term institutionalization of the program.

AN OFFICE OF YOUTH TRANSITION SERVICES is one option to facilitate long-term implementation. Placed in every secondary school, with links to career-exploration programs as well as guidance and counseling at the middle/junior high levels, the office would consist of administrators, parents, students and members of the community coalition to plan and carry out activities and services such as the following:

An Office of Youth Transition Services in every secondary school can facilitate implementation of the program.

1. Assess incoming students to determine strengths, weaknesses and interests; develop individual education and work-experience plans to allow each student to develop to her/his fullest potential.

2. Increase the number of career counseling and employer-based job and career specialists in the schools, especially non-educators, to counsel young people regarding work and job-seeking.

3. Offer more and varied internships, apprenticeships and cooperative education as part of the regular school curriculum; new mixes of work and education that differ from occupational education; and opportunities for community service.

4. Establish youth resource centers in the schools, with centralized access to career and labor market information; opportunities for career-related experiences such as shadowing, mentoring and internships; and support services such as peer groups, health care and child care for teenage mothers while at school or work.

5. Organize, together with employers, the youth labor market for first jobs for subpopulations of youth who are not likely to make the connection without extra help.

6. Monitor learning at work and urge employers to offer incentives to young employees that encourage staying in school, such as scholarships, promotions and rewards for good grades.

7. Track the grades of youth who work while going to school and communicate with school personnel, parents and employers concerning the impact of work on grades, activities and other school expectations.

8. Encourage the integration of more experiential learning into school and other activities.

9. Make the school a resource center on work and experiential learning for parents and teachers.

10. Work with students when problems arise to connect them with other community service agencies.

11. Oversee the development of individual portfolios of accomplishment—including a Career Passport, an experience-based résumé or employability credentials—for all students.

12. Develop linkages with middle/junior high schools and with postsecondary institutions to help students make the transition from one level of schooling to the next.

13. Follow up both graduating students and dropouts for three years to assist them with the continuing transition to work or further education.

14. Survey employers and colleges periodically about strengths/weaknesses of students from the school and use that information to change the education and transition services.

The school-based Office of Youth Transition Services will draw on the resources of and be accountable to the coalition and the community.

The school-based Office of Youth Transition Services will draw on the resources of and be accountable to both the coalition and the community it serves. While none of these proposed activities on its own represents a panacea or a solution, taken together as part of a community-wide systemic approach to the education-work transition of young people, we believe such measures will afford our young people the hope of leading creative and productive lives at home, on the job and in the community.

The cost of a Community Youth Transition Program will depend on the size and nature of the community, the extent of its education-work problem and the general level of community resources. Based on the experiences in the four communities and an examination of similar efforts elsewhere, we estimate that its operation will cost a community between $200,000 and $400,000 annually, depending on staff size and organizational factors.

At the outset, these costs could be shared through a combination of corporate contributions, private foundation grants and government

The challenge to our communities is to take responsibility for the successful transition of youth from education to productive employment.

allocations through the Local Education Agency, Job Training Partnership Act or similar programs. Eventually, as the community begins to experience the economic benefits of having these newly-productive and self-supporting members of the workforce, further funds could be diverted from crisis management into prevention. The prospect of statutory or local ordinance funding at this stage would be real.

The costs of implementing a Community Youth Transition Program, while substantial, represent a solid investment in our young people's future. Without community willingness to make such an investment, the economic and social costs to our youth, our communities and our nation will be staggering. The challenge to ourselves and our communities is to take responsibility for the successful transition of youth from education to productive employment and the assumption of adult roles and responsibilities.

The time for purposeful action is now. The Academy for Educational Development's National Institute for Work and Learning has developed detailed guidelines and specific suggestions for communities interested in working together to help their young people make the transition from school to work. If you would like more information or additional copies of this report, please contact:

ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
National Institute for Work and Learning
1255 23rd Street, N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20037
Tel. 202-862-8845
Fax: 202-862-1947

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Academy for Educational Development
National Institute for Work and Learning
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Telephone: (202) 884-8000
Fax: (202) 884-8400